UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/C.2/1998/2
25 November 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/FRENCH

COMMITTEE ON NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
Resumed 1998 session

SPECIAL REPORTS

Note by the Secretary-General

The attached information, requested by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, has been received from the non-governmental organizations concerned and is transmitted to the Committee for its consideration.

98-37571 (E) 101298

/...

CONTENTS

		Page
I.	PAX CHRISTI INTERNATIONAL	3
	A. Letter dated 16 October 1998 from Pax Christi International to the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the United Nations Secretariat	3
	B. Special report	3
II.	MOVEMENT AGAINST RACISM AND FOR FRIENDSHIP AMONG PEOPLES	10
III.	INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN IN LEGAL CAREERS	14
	A. Letter dated 16 November 1998 from the President of the Federation to the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the United Nations Secretariat	14
	B. The philosophy of the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers (IFWLC)	16
IV.	WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOUR	18
	A. Letter dated 9 October 1998 from the Secretary-General of the World Confederation of Labour to the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the United Nations Secretariat	18
	B. Report on activities in the United Nations and the Economic and Social Council, 1994-1997	18

I. PAX CHRISTI INTERNATIONAL

(Special consultative status)

A. Letter dated 16 October 1998 from Pax Christi International to the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the United Nations Secretariat

We received your fax/letter of 2 October 1998 concerning the request of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations of the Economic and Social Council "to clarify the situation" that took place during the recent session of the Commission on Human Rights, March-April 1998, in Geneva.

Jacques Vittori, Permanent Representative of Pax Christi International to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, has had some contacts with Ali Khorram, the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations Office at Geneva. In their contact Mr. Vittori never had the impression that the Iranian delegation had difficulties with the composition of the delegation of Pax Christi International at the Commission.

One of the delegates of Pax Christi International was Sofy Saidi who was born on 16 January 1961 and who has a Ph.D. in political science. At the Commission, Sofy Saidi was a member of our delegation as stagiaire (trainee) without any mandate to speak in the name of Pax Christi International or to present herself in our name. Mr. Vittori asked for her accreditation in order to give her the opportunity to learn about the United Nations and the human rights systems. Mr. Vittori has been very prudent in speaking out on violations of human rights when a member of the delegation comes from the specific country concerned. He said that he had no reason to doubt her integrity.

This year, there were about 12 members in the governmental delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Mr. Vittori told us that if Sofy Saidi had been recognized by a delegate of the Islamic Republic of Iran as an "agent", he certainly should have been contacted by that delegation. This did not happen.

B. Special report

Pax Christi, International Catholic Peace Movement, was founded in France in 1945 to foster peace and reconciliation. The Movement has national sections, associate groups, affiliated organizations and individual corresponding members on all five continents. Its members, together with the International Council, the Executive Committee and the International Secretariat, are developing a whole series of initiatives to respond to people from all over the world where peace is most needed. The International Secretariat is in Brussels. Between 1994 and 1997, nine organizations became affiliated to Pax Christi International, three in India and one each in Bangladesh, Brazil, Thailand, Pakistan, Guatemala and El Salvador. New Pax Christi groups are emerging in places as widely spread as Haiti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Japan. The Movement continues searching for new approaches to peace in the fields of demilitarization and security, human rights, ecology, economic

justice, development and reconciliation. To work for a just and peaceful world, Pax Christi believes that it must influence those who have power within the current world order. Pursuant to the belief that it can be an effective member of collaborative efforts to influence the systems and entities concerned, Pax Christi International sees representation at international and regional governmental bodies as integral to its work. Pax Christi can both contribute to and benefit from the experience and expertise of the relevant international and regional bodies.

The representatives of Pax Christi International to the United Nations perform their activities on a voluntary basis. An allowance is fixed each year to contribute to the travel and organizational expenses of the representation. The ordinary budget of Pax Christi International is covered through income received as annual contributions from the Pax Christi national sections. Projects are covered by grants and earmarked donations.

The regular work of Pax Christi International is coordinated at annual meetings of international commissions and working groups which also give directions for the representation work in the framework of consultative status with the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations. The three commissions, each with representatives from the national sections, deal with interest areas across regional lines. They are the Commission for Economic Justice/Development, Ecology and Peace; the Human Rights Commission; and the Commission for Security, Demilitarization and Arms Trade. The working groups deal with issues important to particular regions (Africa, Asia/Pacific, Americas and the Caribbean, Middle East, Central and Eastern Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States) or with special themes such as refugees, asylum-seekers, migrants; indigenous peoples, ethnic minority rights and nationalism; impunity and truth commissions; children's rights and children in conflict and war; rights of women; and freedom of conscience and religion. The study, research and lived experience gathered within the commissions and working groups are further substantiated by regional consultations. It is from the direction and focus of the total movement that Pax Christi International's efforts within the United Nations flow and through which the resolutions of the United Nations are implemented. Pax Christi International is a subscribing member of the International Peace Bureau, the World Organisation Torture (OMCT) and Social Alert.

Pax Christi International publishes a Newsletter via e-mail and a Newsletter in print in English and French. The Newsletter includes information, reports, announcements of activities, seminars and conferences, and news from affiliated groups, from the national sections, from the international movement and from our representatives at the United Nations in New York and Geneva. Pax Christi has a catalogue which briefly describes a broad range of its publications on topics such as human rights, security and disarmament, North-South relations, and the United Nations. Detailed reports of the work of the Pax Christi teams were regularly submitted to the Executive Committee and to the appropriate commissions and/or working groups of Pax Christi International. Team members also reported regularly on United Nations initiatives and developments in the various magazines of national sections of Pax Christi.

Pax Christi team at the United Nations in New York

The Pax Christi team at the United Nations in New York dealt mainly with the following issues: disarmament, arms trade and security issues, social development and human rights, interfaith dialogue, child soldiers, street children and refugees. Team members actively participated in United Nations agency and committee meetings, such as those involving the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and those on arms trade issues in general such as that of small arms and light weapons; the World Summit for Social Development; the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II); and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit). They networked with other non-governmental organizations with similar agendas, presented interventions, attended seminars and study days, and developed research files.

The team participated actively in the work of the NGO Committee on Disarmament in its three subcommittees. One representative attended the meetings of the First Committee of the General Assembly on issues of security and disarmament, compiled resource materials on issues such as the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and had regular contacts with the United Nations Centre for Disarmament Affairs. Other representatives attended the meetings of the Third Committee of the General Assembly on human rights issues. They also attended meetings of the different NGO Committees - on Human Rights, on the Family and on Ageing. Each year, Pax Christi made an intervention concerning East Timor at the meeting of the Trusteeship Council.

The United Nations team spent much of its time on issues related to the World Summit for Social Development. A delegation participated in the summit in 1995. Since then, the United Nations team has participated in sessions of the Commission for Social Development, charged with follow-up to the Copenhagen Summit. Work was also done regarding the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In all activities, Pax Christi worked in collaboration with other non-governmental organizations, co-sponsoring the NGO Conference on Demilitarization Issues and making interventions at major non-governmental organization conferences on disarmament. One of the organization's representatives worked on the Iraq sanctions issue. At the request of Ambassador Juan Somavía of Chile, she changed her focus to research elements for a sanctions policy framework for the United Nations and subsequently wrote a short paper entitled "Towards a framework for an international sanctions policy".

Representatives attended the meetings of the Third Committee of the General Assembly on issues related to the rights of children which are an integral part of Pax Christi's agenda. Attention was focused on four specific topics: child soldiers, children affected by armed conflict, street children and exploited children (including child workers and child prostitutes). Members of the team participated in the work of the NGO Committee on UNICEF, and participated in the working groups "Children in armed conflict" and "Exploited children". Representatives were present at the formal presentation and at other events associated with the launching of the United Nations report on the study of the impact of armed conflict on children. Pax Christi fully supports the

recommendations of the report by implementing the relevant recommendations, and collaborating with other non-governmental organizations on workshops to study and promote the report. At the instance of members of the team in New York, an international Pax Christi Working Group on the Rights of the Child was formed as of 1997.

The Organization's representatives formed part of the planning committee to assist the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat and the NGO Executive Committee in organizing the annual NGO Conference in New York. Representation members served on the hospitality committee, one member chaired one of the major panels, and another member was a speaker for the panel on international sanctions. Pax Christi representatives in the interfaith planning group were involved in the preparations for various events such as the United Nations Meditation room and the Temple of understanding workshops. They were also involved in preparing for ceremonies addressing issues of world religions (inter alia, World Peace Day, the Shinto Inauguration and the Buddhist ceremony).

Pax Christi team in Geneva

The team in Geneva was active primarily in the field of human rights, most notably by organizing briefings and by presenting interventions at the annual sessions of the Commission on Human Rights, and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The delegates were also present at meetings such as the Working Group on Minorities and at the third session of the international conference for the elimination of anti-personnel mines. The organization's representatives had regular contact with members of the governmental delegations and with the special rapporteurs.

Interventions in the Commission on Human Rights (both written and oral) during its fiftieth, fifty-first, fifty-second and fifty-third sessions covered issues on religious intolerance, torture and disappearances, violations of human rights in all countries, the right to enjoy an adequate standard of living, the rights of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, indigenous issues, fundamental freedoms, detention or imprisonment, the rights of the child (including international trafficking of children's organs), the role of youth in the promotion and protection of human rights, the right to conscientious objection as a basic human right, exploitation of women, mercenaries, impunity, migrants and displaced persons, the debt crisis and the right to development, anti-personnel mines and extreme poverty. Most of the texts involved covered agenda items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21 and 24. In most of these interventions, specific situations or countries were mentioned such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, East Timor, Myanmar, Northern Ireland, Peru, Brazil, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Rwanda and Algeria. Written interventions focused mainly on the situation in Cuba, Colombia, Burundi and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Some interventions were made in collaboration with other non-governmental organizations, for instance, on Guatemala, Mexico (Chiapas), Colombia and Turkey. Hearings have been organized on the landmines issue. Briefings were organized or co-organized on topics such as Chechnya, Turkey, East Timor, Haiti and Bougainville.

Interventions in the last four sessions of the Subcommissions on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities have focused, inter alia, on the situation in the Middle East (especially, under agenda item 2), on the realization of economic, social and cultural rights (agenda item 4), on contemporary forms of slavery (agenda item 6), on human rights of indigenous peoples (agenda item 7), on intolerance and discrimination (agenda item 8), on the administration of justice and human rights (agenda item 9), on freedom of movement (agenda item 10), on the situation regarding the promotion, full realization and protection of the rights of children and youth (agenda item 11), on the review of further developments (agenda item 12) and, in close cooperation with other non-governmental organizations, on the International Year of the World's Indigenous People and "Apartheid, racism and discrimination". Briefings organized or co-organized included those on Turkey, Indonesia and East Timor, western Papua New Guinea and Bougainville.

Each year, a report has been published covering all the oral and written interventions, an overview of the activities of the representatives, and an analysis of the sessions of both the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and its Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. These reports have been widely distributed within the movement. Fact-finding visits and missions have been sent to study the human rights situations in Brazil (1994), Central Africa (1995), the Middle East (1997) and Central America and Mexico (1997).

Pax Christi team in Vienna

In Vienna, the organization's representative is active within the NGO Committee on Disarmament. As a member of that Committee, he could have many contacts with official delegates and members of the United Nations Secretariat. Special involvement was developed in the matters of nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Landmine Campaign, Abolition 2000, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. A specific concern of the representative in Vienna is oriented towards the rights of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants.

Geographical breakdown of membership (1997 figures)

Pax Christi International has national sections on all continents and associate groups, affiliated organizations and corresponding members in other countries that have no national sections. The Executive Committee comprises members from Angola, Belgium, Brazil, Cameroon, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Haiti, India, Jerusalem, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Portugal, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania and the United States of America.

(a) Sections

Country	Subscribing members
Aotearoa-New Zealand	140
Australia	400
Austria	950
Denmark	200
Flanders	3 900
France	3 000
Germany	7 000
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	2 000
Ireland	150
Italy	1 000
Luxembourg	100
Netherlands	16 500
Philippines	100
Portugal	150
Puerto Rico	100
Slovakia	150
United States of America	15 000
Switzerland	1 400
Wallonia-Brussels	1 100

(b) Associate groups

Hungary, Szeged

Poland, Warsaw

Congo, Kikwit

(c) Affiliated organizations

Brazil: Commisão Pastoral da Terra (CPT)

India: (a) Justice and Peace Commission of the Archdiocese of Bombay, Mumbai; (b) Social Action Committee of St. Andrew's, Goa; (c) Harit Vasai Saurakshan Samiti (Save Green Vasai Committee), Giriz, Vasai (west) Suvarta

Thailand: Justice and Peace Commission of Thailand

Bangladesh: Bangladesh Inter-Religious Council for Peace and Justice

Pakistan: Caritas Pakistan Lahore

Guatemala: Gam (Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo)

El Salvador: Oficina de Tutela Legal

(d) Individual corresponding members

Individual corresponding members are located in the following countries: Bangladesh, Cameroon, the Congo (Brazzaville), Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Liberia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe.

(e) Youth Forum membership

Pax Christi Youth Forum members are located in the following countries: Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

II. MOVEMENT AGAINST RACISM AND FOR FRIENDSHIP AMONG PEOPLES

(Roster)

Since its creation, the Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Among Peoples (MRAP) has been dedicated to showing solidarity with victims of violations of fundamental rights and with peoples who are subjected to unjust repression.

The Movement has frequently intervened at the United Nations on behalf of well-known political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela, Mumia Abu Jamal, Leonard Peltier and Abraham Serfaty. In the first three cases, the part played by racism is obvious. Mr. Serfaty, the fourth case, was widely known for his untiring efforts on behalf of peace among the peoples of the Maghreb and the Mediterranean region.

In addition to hearing from the representative of MRAP, the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities also heard statements made on behalf of these individuals by witnesses from the countries where the violations occurred. Some of those witnesses are quite famous, like José Ramos Horta, a leader from Timor who represented MRAP in Geneva for ten years. The Movement also supported Etienne Tshisekedi, who was persecuted for years under the dictatorship of General Mobutu.

The Movement has been a persistent advocate of many different causes, including equality for women and freedom of religion. With regard to these two issues, we have condemned the situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran. In one case, an Iranian witness was introduced by the permanent representative of MRAP.

Another problem which unfortunately is still in the news is the repression of the Albanian population of Kosovo. From the outset, the permanent representative of MRAP has supported a policy of peaceful resistance and favoured the parallel organization of schools and universities that were dissolved by the Belgrade authorities. The permanent representative of MRAP travelled to Kosovo in 1990, along with representatives of other nongovernmental organizations, on a mission which was eventually expelled. Since then, Albanians from Kosovo have often attended meetings with MRAP credentials, just as others have been accredited by the International Federation of Human Rights (IFHR).

As a general rule, under the policy followed by MRAP representatives in Geneva, problems relating to civil liberties, peaceful relations among peoples and similar questions are usually dealt with in personal interventions of the MRAP representative or in the testimony of an accredited witness. If the witness has to speak, he does so from a text that has been reviewed, i.e., censored or modified by the representative.

This means that MRAP takes full responsibility for all statements, and in no case do invited speakers make statements on behalf of another organization. For example, Saharan ex-prisoners have described the conditions in which they

were held in Moroccan prisons, but they have not referred to the actual conflict between Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (POLISARIO).

The permanent representative, Jean-Jacques Kirkyacharian, is especially proud of the favourable reception given to his statement on the conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijanis. In the spirit of friendship among peoples, he referred to Sayat Nova, a poet well known in that region, where his songs have been sung for two centuries in Armenian, in Turkish-Azeri and in Persian. After the meeting, a representative of Azerbaijan told him (confidentially): "You are right".

The activities of MRAP in Geneva are public, and, should it be necessary, there are many people - particularly United Nations officials - who can confirm the statements made in the report.

The Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Among Peoples will be celebrating its fiftieth anniversary this year.

It was founded by members of the Resistance who wished to continue the struggle carried out under the Nazi occupation against anti-Semitic persecution and the ideology which portrayed Jews and gypsies as unrepentant enemies of "Indo-European" Europe and France.

Extract of the Bylaws

Article I: Purpose

Its purpose shall be to eradicate racism, i.e., all discrimination, exclusion, restriction or preferential treatment, slander, defamation, incitement to hatred or to violence, against individuals or groups because they belong or do not belong to a given ethnic group, nation, "race" or religion.

The aim of MRAP is to combat crimes against humanity, as well as all attempts to justify such crimes, and to oppose them in all their forms.

MRAP also shall strive to ensure that all human beings, without distinction, are allowed to exercise their rights and freedoms, and that they are accorded respect and dignity under conditions of equality in whatever field and place they may be.

It shall aim to promote mutual knowledge, understanding and friendship among individuals of different backgrounds, as well as among all peoples, in order to contribute to world peace.

Article 2: Means

MRAP uses all legal means of action at the national and international levels to further the principles and objectives of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted on 10 December 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly, the International Covenants on Human Rights, the International Convention on the

Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, and the European Convention on Human Rights.

The activities undertaken by the association include the following:

(a) Campaigns and appeals to public opinion to combat racist acts and outlaw groups and individuals who perpetrate them;

(b) Recourse to competent judicial authorities, both national and international, to denounce the perpetrators and impose the appropriate criminal, civil and administrative penalties, particularly as provided in domestic legislation and under international law;

(c) Moral and material support, including legal assistance, for victims of racism;

(d) Presentation to public authorities of petitions and proposed legislation;

(e) Rallies, demonstrations and public ceremonies;

(f) Awarding of distinctions, rewards or prizes to individuals who have effectively contributed to the struggle against racism;

(g) Support for educators who inculcate in children and youth respect for human beings and anti-racist civic responsibility.

The association may establish relations with foreign institutions or organizations when necessary in order to build consensus for international action against racism, in the context of international law and domestic legislation.

This year MRAP has a membership of 5,000, mainly in France. It also has members in the United States of America and in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, French-speaking Switzerland and the Netherlands.

Its resources are mainly provided by membership dues; occasionally, it also receives bequests.

The Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Among Peoples is a member of the Commission nationale consultative pour les droits de l'homme, and participates actively in its work.

It is also very active in the United Nations (New York and Geneva), particularly in the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. It is a member of the Special Committee of International Non-Governmental Organizations on Human Rights, and its representative in Geneva was elected vice-chairman of the Non-Governmental Subcommittee on Racism, Racial Discrimination and Decolonization.

At the United Nations, the oral statements and written communications of the Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Among Peoples deal essentially with the need to fight racism in the world, and to promote friendship among peoples as this is the only rational solution to national and international disputes.

The Movement consistently stresses solidarity and the complementarity of all rights, whether civil and political or economic and social.

The representatives of the Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Among Peoples at the United Nations have excellent relations with the missions of Member States (especially the French-speaking ones) and with United Nations experts and officials.

For the last two years, the Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Among Peoples has been actively involved, along with organizations in the European Union countries, in developing a network of anti-racist nongovernmental organizations, and this project will soon be operational.

III. INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN IN LEGAL CAREERS

(Special consultative status)

A. Letter dated 16 November 1998 from the President of the Federation to the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the United Nations Secretariat

It was with all due seriousness that I received your letter of 2 October 1998, confirmed by our telephone conversation, both of which referred to the need to justify the activities of the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers (IFWLC). The association was established in 1929 and I have appended an extremely brief account of its history and activities should you need to convey this information to others.

I did not reply immediately because it was my duty first to write to inform the IFWLC representative in Geneva, Dr. Renée Bridel, whose moral standing, I venture to suggest, is in all respects beyond reproach.

Mme Bridel has always been involved in the defence of human rights, and campaigns in that field with the utmost dedication. She regularly forwards me accounts of what transpires at all the meetings she attends in Geneva, especially the problems concerning women's rights and the rights of the child. To the best of my knowledge she has so far not once been absent.

Also, immediately following our telephone conversation I tried to reach her by telephone, but she was away on a trip.

So I wrote to her, not failing to cite the "terrorists" you had identified based on information given by the plaintiffs.

She has not yet returned, which is why I have not received any acknowledgement from her of my letter.

I too have been away, attending the meeting of the Federation's Administrative Council held in Lisbon from 27 October to 2 November.

However, I took the opportunity of this annual get-together of the members of the Federation's Council to speak to Council members about a problem which not only came as a surprise to the members of this Administrative Council but more than anything else annoyed them because they could not accept that a federation of lawyers that studied all the major problems relating to the family, women and children and did not stint in the attention and effort it devoted to all the other problems concerning social development and economic activities, without being in any way neglectful of all serious causes, could have had no knowledge of it.

We therefore checked the members of each of the national associations, quite apart from the International Federation itself, to see whether we could find one of the names of the two young ladies you forwarded to me, and naturally we did not find anyone; as for the third name - a man's - it could not be that of a member of an association of women.

On the other hand, it has been brought to my attention - and here it is for me to question you - that the IFWLC is not the only association which has been the butt of such complaints which, as far as I am concerned, were completely unfounded. It would seem that other associations, which I have no a priori reason to believe count terrorists within their ranks, have been denounced for the same reasons. They are:

(a) the World Confederation of Labour;

(b) the Movement Against Racism and for Friendship between Peoples; and

(c) Pax Christi International.

These references, which I give as examples, do not seem to me to be suspect, but I give the information on a restricted use basis because IFWLC has no relations with the associations concerned.

That being the case, at the very time of writing I can now read in a communication from Mme Renée Bridel, who has received mine (I quote verbatim): "I accredited as witnesses and not as members of IFWLC persons who could testify once again to the persecution women suffered in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The subjects the non-governmental organizations denounce are violations of the rights of the human person in all countries. We were in agreement on all these points with the United Nations Special Rapporteur who denounced the same violations."

This letter, which has not yet been confirmed by telephone, explains the situation. If I have understood correctly, Mme Bridel merely accredited as witnesses, and not as members of IFWLC, persons who have aired their views publicly. In her letter she expresses the hope that I am in agreement with the position she took.

You will agree that when it is a question of human rights as defined by the Charter of the United Nations and in 1979 in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, I am not entitled to reproach our representative for having taken that position even if - as is the case - I had not authorized it in writing.

No one, I think, in the United Nations, could describe this behaviour as worthy of reproach.

The fact remains that I appreciate your concerns and cannot wait to reply because you are disturbed regarding the morality of IFWLC members. They can be suspected only of 70 years of unflagging dedication to the law, to right, and therefore to women's rights.

The fact also remains that I am pursuing my investigation, though I am still not in any sense in possession of a single fact that would enable me to point it in any particular direction.

That is why it seems to be essential to know the reasons given for supporting the charge of terrorism, since Mme Bridel summoned witnesses, and it

would seem to be part of the tack of the United Nations to hear those who say, rightly or wrongly, that they are the victims of discrimination.

That is why I hope that this letter will enable you better to appreciate the situation as it has been reported to me, and if you are able to help me to clarify a hitherto unknown, unforeseen and, I am convinced, unjustified, problem, I thank you in advance.

B. The philosophy of the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers (IFWLC)

IFWLC was established in Paris in 1929 on the occasion of a congress of "International Social Service" which was attended by five women lawyers who, finding themselves somewhat isolated in their careers due to having for so long been ostracized by their male colleagues, decided to establish an association in accordance with law.

Mission

To discover all legal means of ensuring the protection and promotion of human rights, and particularly the rights of women, of developing peace in the world, and of protecting the environment, without regard for political opinions or religious affiliations but with respect for those of its members.

Achievements in the past 70 years

IFWLC is internationally recognized on five continents: my presence here is proof of that.

Activities

Annual meetings during which all the major problems of society are discussed, with very structured progressive legal proposals (many of which served as the basis for national legislative systems): the right of women to equality in all fields, not out of a rather empty feminism but out of simple respect for human rights.

Some themes:

(a) Modern woman and her protection in law;

(b) The right of the child to grow up in a united world;

(c) Preparation and implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);

(d) Legal paths to understanding among peoples, which was dealt with in Moscow in 1984;

(e) Social justice guaranteed by law;

(f) Women and two centuries of progress in human rights;

(g) The Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995;

(h) The 1996 enlarged council in Barcelona on women and work in the business world;

(i) The 1997 congress in Naples on "Woman on the threshold of the third millennium" and the theme set for the years 1998, 1999 and 2000 of "Violence towards women";

(j) Participation by IFWLC in the 1998 colloquium on women in legal careers, the obstacles that remain and the prospects for the future - a subject which was dealt with in 1973 but is still topical, as it was taken up again on the occasion of a symposium of European women jurists held in Paris in June 1998 under the auspices of the British Council and on the initiative of the Queen's Counsel, Chie Booth or Mrs. Tony Blair under the title "Women in Law"; the symposium was adjourned by the French Minister of Justice, Mme Elisabeth Guigou;

(k) The 1998 Administrative Council meeting in Lisbon.

The IFWLC enjoys consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

IV. WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOUR

(General consultative status)

A. Letter dated 9 October 1998 from the Secretary-General of the World Confederation of Labour to the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the United Nations Secretariat

We hereby acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 2 October 1998 requesting us to clarify the situation with regard to the allegations made by the Iranian Government that the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) would have accredited individuals belonging to a terrorist group to the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights.

First of all, we firmly reject these unfounded accusations. The persons accredited by WCL to the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights all belong to organization members of our international confederation and they have our full confidence. Taking into consideration the vague nature and the few details of the accusations, a further inquiry from our side is not possible at this moment. However, we are always at your disposal for any other clarification in this respect.

B. Report on activities in the United Nations and the Economic and Social Council, 1994-1997

1. Name of organization: World Confederation of Labour (WCL)

2. Address: 33, rue de Trèves, 1040 Brussels, Belgium

3. Brief introduction: The World Confederation of Labour (WCL) is an international movement of trade union organizations. It fights for the creation of economic, social, cultural and political structures for the integrated development of the human person. WCL is dedicated to the study, representation and defence of the material, moral and spiritual interests of workers. It also subscribes to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ideals set out in the Charter of the United Nations and the constitutional instruments of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

WCL has 20 million members in 136 affiliated organizations in 113 countries.

4. Economic and Social Council: Representatives of WCL have participated in the meetings of the Council and have spoken on various agenda items:

(a) 1995: participation in the Council's 1995 substantive session - statement on agenda item 3 (a);

(b) The WCL Secretary-General also had a meeting with the Secretary-General of the United Nations in July 1995 during the Council's Geneva session;

(c) 1994-1995: active participation of WCL representatives in the meetings of the preparatory committees for the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development, including participation by the WCL Secretary-General in a preparatory meeting in New York from 6 to 12 March 1995;

(d) A WCL confederal secretary also took part in a seminar organized by the United Nations at Mohonk (22 and 23 June 1995) on "The involvement of civil society in the follow-up to the Social Summit";

(e) From 24 June to 25 July 1996 the WCL representative at the United Nations in New York represented our international organization at the session of the Economic and Social Council, at which the following topics were among those debated: elimination of poverty, cooperation for social development, human rights, and the advancement of women;

(f) 1997: participation of a WCL representative in the Council's substantive session. Statement on agenda item 5: Integrated and coordinated implementation and follow-up of the major United Nations international conferences and summits.

WCL representatives have participated in the work of the Commission on Human Rights over the past four years:

(a) 1994: participation in the Commission's fiftieth session; statements on the following agenda items:

(i) Right to development (7 and 8);

(ii) Violations of human rights in any part of the world (12);

(iii) Measures to improve the situation and ensure the human rights and dignity of all migrant workers (13);

(b) 1995: participation in the Commission's fifty-first session; statements on the following agenda items:

(i) Right to development (7 and 8);

(ii) Violations of human rights in any part of the world (12);

(c) 1996: participation in the Commission's fifty-second session; statements on the following agenda items:

(i) Violations of human rights in any part of the world (10);

(ii) Measures to improve the situation and ensure the human rights and dignity of all migrant workers (11);

(d) 1997: participation in the Commission's fifty-third session; statements on agenda item 10 - Violations of human rights in any part of the world.

Participation of WCL representatives in the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities:

(a) Participation in the forty-sixth session (1994), forty-seventh session (1995), forty-eighth session (1996) and forty-ninth session (1997);

(b) Statement at the forty-sixth session (1994) on agenda item 20.

Meetings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

(a) 1994: participation in:

(i) Ad Hoc Working Group on Comparative Experiences with Privatization, 5-8 April;

(ii) Ad Hoc Working Group on Expansion of Trading Opportunities for Developing Countries, 4-8 July;

(iii) Standing Committee on Poverty Alleviation, 25-29 July;

(iv) Trade and Development Board, 19-30 September;

(b) 1995: participation in:

(i) Commission on International Investment and Transnational Corporations, 24-28 April;

(ii) Ad Hoc Working Group to explore the issue of structural adjustment for the transition to disarmament;

(iii) Trade and Development Board, 11-15 December;

(c) 1996: participation in:

(i) Trade and Development Board, 26-29 March;

(ii) Trade and Development Board, 8 July;

(iii) Expert Meeting on Competition Law and Policy, 13-15 November;

(iv) UNCTAD IX in Midrand, South Africa, 27 April to 11 May;

(d) 1997: participation in:

(i) Trade and Development Board, 13-15 October;

(ii) Expert Meeting on Existing Agreements on Investment and their Development Dimensions, 28-30 May;

(e) UNCTAD consultations and international trade union organizations: preparation, participation and statements at the annual consultations between UNCTAD and international trade union organizations in 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997.

Cooperation of WCL representatives with the other specialized agencies of the United Nations and in international conferences:

(a) 13th consultative meeting between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and international trade union organizations in Rome, 11-13 December 1995;

(b) World Food Summit, 13-17 November 1996;

(c) United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, Turkey, 3-14 June 1996;

(d) Representatives of the World Committee for Women of WCL attended the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, 4-15 September 1995.

International Labour Organization/International Labour Office:

(a) As an international trade union organization, WCL takes part in almost all the ILO tripartite meetings, as well as in the sessions of the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference, at which it always makes a statement in the debate on the report of the Director-General. At the regional level, the WCL confederal secretary responsible for Africa attended the eighth African Regional Conference of ILO in Mauritius from 19 to 26 January 1994. The President and Secretary-General of WCL attended the fifth European Regional Conference of ILO in Warsaw from 24 to 26 December 1995;

(b) On 19 and 20 February 1996 the WCL President, Secretary-General and permanent representative in Geneva had meetings with the ILO Director-General;

(c) The activities conducted in conjunction with ILO are coordinated by a permanent WCL office in Geneva.